

Contents

1.	Introduction	1-1
1.1	Introduction	1-1
1.2	The Proposed Development	1-1
1.3	Site Planning History	1-2
1.4	The Applicant	1-2
1.5	Purpose of the EIA Report	1-3
1.6	EIA Team and Structure of the EIA Report	1-3
1.7	Other Documents Supporting the Application	1-4
1.8	Statement of Competence	1-4
1.9	Availability of the EIA Report	1-5
1.10	Commenting on the Application	1-5
1.11	Key EIA Report Definitions	1-5

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIA Report) has been prepared by LUC on behalf of Wind Power North Four Ltd (hereafter referred to as 'the Applicant') to accompany a planning application being made to East Ayrshire Council (EAC) under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended ('the Act') to construct and operate Glenouther Wind Farm (hereafter referred to as 'the Proposed Development') for a period of 35 years.
- 1.1.2 This chapter is accompanied by the following figures:
- EIA Report **Volume 3a: Figures**:
 - **Figure 1.1: Site Location.**
- 1.1.3 The following technical appendices also support this chapter:
- EIA Report **Volume 4: Technical Appendices**:
 - **Technical Appendices 1.1: Statement of Expertise.**

1.2 The Proposed Development

- 1.2.1 The Proposed Development will comprise the following:
- Up to five wind turbines each with a maximum blade tip height of up to 200 metres (m) and an indicative combined site output capacity of 36 megawatts (MW);
 - Medium intensity (2000 candela (cd)) steady red aviation warning lights installed on the hubs of Turbines (T)1, T3, T4 and T5¹ which will be reduced to 200 cd in clear weather conditions, and infra-red (non-visible) warning lights on all turbines;
 - Foundations supporting each turbine (comprising a mixture of piled and excavated construction methods);
 - Permanent crane hardstandings at each turbine location (comprising a mixture of piled and excavated construction methods);
 - A site access point which links to an existing track which runs alongside the M77 motorway to the unclassified road at Floak Bridge;
 - Approximately 4.1 kilometres (km) of new onsite access track comprising approximately 1.3 km of excavated track and approximately 2.8 km of floated track;
 - Up to 12 new watercourse crossings (comprising two mapped watercourses, five minor watercourses (not mapped) and five artificial drains);
 - A control building and substation;
 - A network of underground cables to connect the turbines to the onsite substation; and
 - A Biodiversity Enhancement Management Plan (BEMP).
- 1.2.2 In addition to the above permanent components associated with the operation of the Proposed Development, construction will also require the following components/works:
- A temporary construction compound including car parking;
 - Approximately 0.3 km of temporary floated track north-east of the substation which will be used as a dedicated passing place for construction vehicles as they enter and exit the Site;
 - Temporary auxiliary hardstandings at each turbine (comprising a mixture of excavated, piled and floated construction methods); and

¹ As approved by the Civil Aviation Authority – see **Technical Appendix 4.3: Aviation Assessment.**

- The removal of forestry to physically construct the Proposed Development, support wider woodland management and enable forest-to-bog restoration as part of the BEMP².

- 1.2.3 **Chapter 4: Development Description** provides full details of the Proposed Development. In addition, details are also provided of the proposed grid connection (the Likely Grid Connection Route) which does not form part of the planning application, but which has been assessed in this EIA Report.
- 1.2.4 The location of the Proposed Development, i.e. the Site (as defined by the redline application boundary) occupies an area of approximately 205 ha and is located on Glenouther Moor, approximately 4.5 km north-east of Stewarton and west of the M77 motorway. The Site comprises mostly commercial plantation forestry with areas of open bog habitat. The Site forms part of a wider landownership boundary with a total area of approximately 378 ha and over which the Applicant has control. The Site itself is located wholly within the EAC administrative area (see **Figure 1.1**) but is directly adjacent to the East Renfrewshire Council (ERC) administrative boundary.
- 1.2.5 The construction phase of the Proposed Development is estimated to take approximately 20 months including forestry works (an indicative construction programme can be found in **Chapter 4**). The expected operational life of the Proposed Development is 35 years from the date of commissioning. Thereafter, a decision will be made to either fully decommission, replace the turbines, or extend the operational life of the Proposed Development. Decommissioning will last approximately nine months and will involve the removal of the turbines, hardstandings, electrical equipment, substation compound and buildings.

1.3 Site Planning History

- 1.3.1 On 31st July 2015, a planning application (15/0584/PP) was submitted to EAC by Glenouther Renewable Energy Park Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Gamesa Energy UK Limited (a part of Gamesa Corporación Tecnológica), for the construction and operation of 12 turbines at 126.5 m to blade tip, with associated infrastructure with an installed capacity of up to 30 MW. This was accompanied by an Environmental Statement (ES). The Site proposed for Glenouther Renewable Energy Park largely corresponded with the wider landownership boundary shown on **Figure 1.1**, however access was proposed to be taken from Clunch Road to the south-west and so the Site boundary extended to this area. The application was refused by EAC on 25th May 2016 due to landscape and visual impacts (including cumulative considerations) and residential visual amenity impacts on surrounding properties. The project was also considered by EAC to exceed any landscape capacity for wind turbines in the area. Subsequently, an appeal was lodged against the decision to the (then) Department of Planning and Environmental Appeals (DPEA) division of the Scottish Government on 4th August 2016 (appeal reference PPA-190-2059-1). The refusal by EAC was upheld by the Reporter for the same reasons, and the appeal was dismissed and planning permission refused on 2nd October 2018. Since then, planning policy in relation to onshore wind has changed significantly. The Applicant has reviewed the reasons for the previous refusal of Glenouther Renewable Energy Park and the latest climate change and planning policy context and is bringing forward a proposal which seeks to respond positively to policy and the reasons for refusal whilst deploying more modern and efficient turbine technology. The Proposed Development is subject to a new planning application being submitted to EAC and will be built out, should planning permission be granted.

1.4 The Applicant

- 1.4.1 The application for planning permission is being made by Wind Power North Four Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary company of Vestas Development A/S which is in turn owned by Vestas Wind Systems A/S. The project is being developed under the terms of an agreement between Force 9 Energy Limited and Vestas Development A/S. Through the agreement, Force 9 leads on the development process of wind farm proposals up to consent. Force 9 is supported during this period by Vestas both financially and with staff resources requested by Force 9 on issues such as access, engineering design, turbine selection, wind flow and optimisation of energy capture.
- 1.4.2 Vestas is, by many measures, the leading global manufacturer and supplier of wind turbines. Vestas has installed over 91,000 turbines with a capacity of over 189,000 MW in 88 countries worldwide. In addition, Vestas has a broad range of experience of project development issues including turbine siting and optimisation, grid connection and construction management. They maintain and service over 56,000 turbines worldwide amounting to 156,000 MW. Force 9 Energy is a successful, independent UK wind farm developer. Wind farms developed by the Force 9 team

² As detailed in **Technical Appendix 4.1: Wind Farm Forestry Plan** which also includes long-term forestry works associated with the operation of the Proposed Development.

and in operation already contribute more than 200 MW of clean, renewable, generating capacity in the UK. Force 9 also has a development pipeline of over 300 MW of consented potential installed capacity, 72 MW (installed wind capacity) of developments in planning, and is bringing forward a portfolio of over 400 MW of potential generating capacity (including Glenouther).

1.5 Purpose of the EIA Report

- 1.5.1 This EIA Report presents the findings of the EIA undertaken in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017³ (the 'EIA Regulations') and best practice guidance and based upon the Scoping Opinion adopted by EAC. Specifically, it describes the Proposed Development and the current conditions at the Site, and identifies the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development during the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases, whilst identifying, where necessary, any mitigation measures that may be required to ameliorate these effects, as well as any potential enhancement measures to secure positive benefits. In addition to the Proposed Development, the EIA Report provides information on the Likely Grid Connection Route and considers its likely significant effects, including in-combination with the Proposed Development. The EIA Report ensures that decision makers, consultees and members of the public have all the necessary environmental information when considering the application for the Proposed Development. As such, the findings of the EIA Report will be a material consideration in the application decision making process. Information on the legislative requirements for EIA and details of the EIA process is included in **Chapter 2: Approach to the EIA**.

1.6 EIA Team and Structure of the EIA Report

- 1.6.1 This EIA Report has been compiled by LUC on behalf of the Applicant. Whilst LUC had overall responsibility for the coordination and preparation of the EIA Report, a team of technical specialists prepared the topic-based assessment chapters (see **Table 1.1** below) and provided advice/input to the design of the Proposed Development.
- 1.6.2 The EIA Report is structured as follows:
- Volume 1: Non-Technical Summary;
 - Volume 2: Main Report;
 - Volume 3a: Figures;
 - Volume 3b: Landscape and Visual Amenity Visualisations (Part 1);
 - Volume 3c: Landscape and Visual Amenity Visualisations (Part 2) and Cultural Heritage Visualisations;
 - Volume 4: Technical Appendices; and
 - Volume 5: Confidential Documents⁴.
- 1.6.3 Volume 2: Main Report contains 13 chapters comprising four introductory chapters, eight topic assessment chapters and a summary chapter which consolidates all the identified likely significant effects prior to and following the implementation of additional mitigation measures. Further details are included in **Table 1.1** below.

Table 1.1 EIA Report Chapter List and Lead Authors

Chapter Number	Chapter Title	Author
1	Introduction (this chapter) provides a brief overview of the Proposed Development, the Applicant and outlines the structure of the EIA Report.	LUC
2	Approach to the EIA provides more detail on the EIA process including scoping and consultation.	LUC

³ The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017. Available [online] at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2017/102/contents> [Accessed: 20th February 2026]

⁴ This volume includes information relating to protected species and will be provided to EAC, NatureScot and RSPB only.

Chapter Number	Chapter Title	Author
3	Site Selection and Design Strategy summarises the grounds for selection of the chosen site, details the approach to the design strategy, and discusses the considered site alternatives.	LUC
4	Development Description provides a detailed description of the Proposed Development for which planning permission is being sought including construction processes and proposed environmental management. This chapter also describes how certain operational impacts will be managed, including in relation to aviation and shadow flicker.	LUC (with inputs from Force 9, Pell Frischmann, Scottish Woodlands and Aviatica).
5	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	LUC
6	Cultural Heritage	LUC
7	Ecology	MacArthur Green (part of SLR)
8	Ornithology	Natural Research Projects Ltd
9	Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Peat	Kaya/OWC
10	Noise and Vibration	Hayes Mackenzie
11	Access, Traffic and Transport	Pell Frischmann
12	Climate Change	LUC (with inputs from Carbon Forecast)
13	Summary of Likely Significant Effects	LUC

1.7 Other Documents Supporting the Application

1.7.1 The planning application is also accompanied by the following documents, which do not form part of this EIA Report:

- **A Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report** (Prepared by Muckle Media) which details the public consultation that has been carried out in compliance with statutory requirements, and how feedback has been taken into consideration in developing the proposals;
- **A Design and Access Statement (DAS)** (prepared by LUC) which provides information on the iterative design process including the key design drivers and how the proposal has responded to these objectives;
- **A Planning Statement** (prepared by LUC) which describes the planning and renewable energy policies that are relevant to the Proposed Development along with an appraisal of the Proposed Development's compliance with these policies; and
- **A Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreation Impact Assessment** (prepared by BiGGAR Economics) which quantifies the anticipated economic and employment benefits of the Proposed Development, details how it will deliver social and community value, and presents an evidenced based analysis of the relationship between the Proposed Development, the local visitor economy and recreational assets.

1.8 Statement of Competence

1.8.1 In accordance with Regulation 5(5) of the EIA Regulations, the Applicant has ensured that the EIA Report has been prepared by 'competent experts' as noted in **Table 1.1**. The competent experts hold the appropriate professional qualifications for their area of expertise as detailed in **Technical Appendix 1.1**. The EIA Report has been compiled and reviewed by professional and experienced EIA practitioners at LUC, holding relevant undergraduate and post-graduate degrees, membership of the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP). LUC is a Registrant of IEMA's EIA Quality Mark Scheme. This scheme allows organisations that lead the co-ordination of statutory EIAs in the UK to make a commitment to excellence in EIA activities, and to have this commitment independently reviewed on a regular basis.

1.9 Availability of the EIA Report

- 1.9.1 A hard copy of the full EIA Report and the other supporting application documents will be available for public viewing during business opening hours during the application consultation period at the following addresses:
- The Johnnie Walker Bond
Strand Street
Kilmarnock
East Ayrshire
KA1 1HU
- Stewarton Community Library
17 Avenue Street, Stewarton
Kilmarnock
East Ayrshire
KA3 5AP
- 1.9.2 A hard copy of the EIA Report (excluding confidential environmental information) can be obtained at a cost of £1,200.00. Alternatively, a USB memory stick is available for £15.00. Any requests should be made using the following email address: glenouther@mucklemedia.co.uk.
- 1.9.3 An electronic version of the EIA Report and other reports supporting the application will also be available to view and download from the project website at: <https://glenouther.vestaswindprojects.com/> and the EAC planning portal: <https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/PlanningAndTheEnvironment/Planning-applications/Planning-applications.aspx>.

1.10 Commenting on the Application

- 1.10.1 When the application for the Proposed Development has been submitted, EAC will advertise the submission of EIA Report in accordance with Regulation 21 of the EIA Regulations in a local newspaper, the Edinburgh Gazette and the EAC planning portal through the preparation of a notice. The notice will describe the application, state where copies of the EIA Report are available for public viewing and state a deadline date by which any person should make comments to the EAC in relation to the application. The notice will also be made available on the project website.
- 1.10.2 The Applicant has also advised the following local Community Councils of the EIA Report being available for viewing:
- Stewarton and District Community Council;
 - Fenwick Community Council; and
 - Dunlop and Lugton.

1.11 Key EIA Report Definitions

- 1.11.1 Key definitions used throughout the EIA Report are noted below. Topic specific definitions are set out in the 'Glossary/abbreviations' section at the end of **Chapters 5-12**:
- **The Site:** Shown as the area delineated by the red line planning application boundary in all figures.
 - **The Proposed Development:** Shown as the components within the red line planning application boundary on **Figure 4.1: Site Layout Plan (Overview)** for which planning permission is being sought.
 - **The Likely Grid Connection Route:** Shown as the proposed route on **Figure 4.8a** and described in **Chapter 4**. As the grid connection works will be subject to a separate consenting process, it does not, therefore, form part of the 'Proposed Development' for which planning permission is being sought, but has been considered on a standalone and in-combination (with the Proposed Development) assessment basis in each topic chapter where relevant.
 - **The Study Area:** the area(s) within which effects are assessed for each individual topic area. The Study Area varies depending on the nature of the potential effects within each discipline, as informed by professional guidance and EIA best practice. The study areas are therefore explained within the approach and methods section of the relevant technical chapters (**5 to 12**) of this EIA Report.